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AUTHORITY

AGO D/A ltr, 29 Apr 1980

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DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
OFFICE OF THE ADJUTANT GENERAL
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20310

IN REPLY REFER TO

AGAM-P (M) (19 Sep 67) FOR OT RD-670370

25 September 1967

SUBJECT: Operational Report - Lessons Learned, Headquarters,
86th Signal Battalion (Spt)

TO: SEE DISTRIBUTION

1. Subject report is forwarded for review and evaluation by USACDC in accordance with paragraph 6f, AR 1-19 and by USCONARC in accordance with paragraph 6c and d, AR 1-19. Evaluations and corrective actions should be reported to ACSFOR OT within 90 days of receipt of covering letter.

2. Information contained in this report is provided to insure appropriate benefits in the future from Lessons Learned during current operations, and may be adapted for use in developing training material.

BY ORDER OF THE SECRETARY OF THE ARMY:

Kenneth G. Wickham

KENNETH G. WICKHAM
Major General, USA
The Adjutant General

1 Incl
as

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FEB 28 1968

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FOR OT RD
670370

Incl 30

DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
HEADQUARTERS, 86TH SIGNAL BATTALION (SIT)
APO San Francisco 96353

SCCVSG-SV-CQ

13 May 1967

SUBJECT: Operational Report for Quarterly Period Ending 30 April 1967
(HCS-CSFOR-65)

TO: See Distribution

SECTION I: SIGNIFICANT UNIT ACTIVITIES

1. General: During the reporting period, combat support operations were greatly expanded in the western half of III Corps Tactical Zone.

The 587th Signal Company (Support) was assigned to the battalion upon its arrival in Vietnam in March 1967. Signal Center platoons of the 587th Signal Company (Spt) replaced elements of Company B, 36th Signal Battalion at Tay Ninh and Dau Tieng. A third platoon of the 587th Signal Company (Spt) was assigned the communications mission for Lai Khe.

An element of Company B, 36th Signal Battalion, operating Nui Ba Den Radio Relay Station was replaced by personnel of the 587th Signal Company (Spt).

Company B, 36th Signal Battalion was consolidated at Cu Chi, and has expanded its facilities there.

2. Personnel: In February the battalion strength was 237, rose to 610 in March with the arrival of the 587th Signal Company (Spt), and increased to 656 in April.

3. Operations:

a. The 587th Signal Company (Spt) joined the battalion on 24 March 1967 and assumed the mission of providing area communications for the Tay Ninh, Dau Tieng and Lai Khe base camps. An element of the company was assigned the task of operating the radio relay site at Nui Ba Den mountain.

b. The deployment of the 587th Signal Company (Spt) enabled the provisional platoon of Company B, 36th Signal Battalion to return to Cu Chi base camp from Tay Ninh. The consolidation of Company B at Cu Chi greatly enhanced operations there due to the additional personnel and equipment available.

c. During the reporting period, a permanent outside cable plant was completed by the 267th Signal Company at the Cu Chi base camp. This cable plant now provides access for base camp subscribers to Cu Chi switchboard and will serve the dial central office upon its activation.

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670370

1

SCCVSG-SV-CO

SUBJECT: Operational Report for Quarterly Period Ending 30 April 1967
(RCS CSFOR-65)

d. An AB 585 antenna tower was erected at Cu Chi to a height of 106 feet and presently accommodates all antennas for the site. Upon erection of the tower, the Cu Chi MASC was relocated in the tower area, adjacent to the allocated LOS site. The Cu Chi switchboard and commcenter remained in the old area.

e. The Interim Autodin Data Terminal was transferred from this battalion to the 69th Signal Battalion where a greater need for the data terminal existed at that time.

4. Training:

a. During the reporting period, the battalion initiated a program of Mission Essential Training. The objective of this program is to maintain a state of high operational effectiveness that will enable all assigned units to effectively perform their communications missions.

b. Emphasis was also placed on effective on-the-job training to increase the proficiency of trained operators and technicians, and to cross-train personnel in critical LOS's.

c. Special orientation classes were conducted for the newly arrived 587th Signal Company (Support).

5. Logistics:

a. The major activity in this area was the development and extension of the battalion cantonment area. A 60KW generator was obtained from PA&E for cantonment lighting. Semipermanent buildings have been constructed to house all troops. Permission was obtained from the 25th Infantry Division to establish a battalion PX which is open seven days a week. The operation of the battalion PX enables the troops to purchase everyday necessities without the inconvenience and loss of man hours involved in waiting in long lines at the main Cu Chi PX.

b. HHD sponsored the newest member of the 86th Signal Battalion, the 587th Signal Company, upon its arrival in country. Mess hall equipment was obtained on a temporary loan basis and set up in advance of the company's arrival. As a result the 587th Signal Company was able to prepare meals in its own messhall immediately upon arrival in Cu Chi. Tents and canvas cots were also obtained on a temporary loan and set up prior to the company's arrival.

c. HHD also billeted a 90 man platoon of the 267th Signal Company. Tents and canvas cots were obtained on a temporary loan and set up prior to the platoon's arrival.

d. On 15 March 1967, the battalion came under enemy mortar attack, however damage to equipment was minor. All destroyed supplies were reordered. A water trailer belonging to the 267th Signal Company was damaged. While this trailer was being repaired, the 25th Infantry Division Supply Office provided another water trailer on a temporary basis.

3
SCCVSG-SV-CO

SUBJECT: Operational Report for Quarterly Period Ending 30 April 1967
(RCS CSFOR-65)

SECTION II: COMMANDERS OBSERVATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

PART 1: Observations (Lessons Learned)

a. Personnel:

In-Country R & R

Item: Inadequate facilities for In-Country R & R program.

Discussions: During the past quarter less than 1% of the enlisted men in this battalion had the opportunity to take advantage of the In-Country R & R program.

Observations: The R & R program was assigned to boost the morale of the men serving in Vietnam, yet it is unfortunate that the majority will not be able to enjoy this privilege during their tour. Present facilities do not have the capacity to accommodate all the enlisted men serving in Vietnam.

b. Operations: None

c. Training:

Training Aids

Item: Training Aids

Discussion: Mandatory and recurring training requirements are met by the battalion's units without benefit of classroom training aids such as map and chart boards, audiovisual aids, and adequate building space.

Observations: Training aids and construction materials for classrooms would greatly enhance the quality of instruction.

d. Intelligence: None

e. Logistics:

WABTOC Packages

Item: WABTOC Packages

Discussion: WABTOC provides the primary construction materials for all semi-permanent structures the battalion utilizes.

Observations: WABTOC must take into consideration the mission of the unit. The 587th Signal Company operates three messhalls, but only one refrigerator and one ice box were authorized for the company.

SCCVSG-SV-CO

SUBJECT: Operational Report for Quarterly Period Ending 30 April 1967
(RCS CSFOR-65)

Spark Plugs

Item: Spark plug for Generator Set, 10KW, PU-619.

Discussion: The battalion motor maintenance section has an authorized stockage on a 30 day PLL of 8 spark plugs, FSN 2910-820-7082, for one Generator Set, 10KW, PU-619. The section used 24 of these spark plugs during February, due to fouling and eroded points caused by excessive lead content in the available POL supplies.

Observations: Inadequate stockage authorized of spark plugs.

Floating Stock for Temporary Loans

Item: Floating Stock

Discussion: The arrival of the 587th Signal Company was facilitated when mess hall equipment, cots and tents were obtained on a temporary loan basis from the 25th Infantry Division and set up prior to the company's arrival.

Observations: Authorization of Base Camp Supply Officers to maintain a floating stock of such supplies for temporary loan to newly arrived units would be of great benefit.

Cases for TH-5

Item: Cases for Terminal, Telegraph TH-5/TG

Discussion: The battalion has experienced numerous failures of the Terminal, Telegraph TH-5/TG due to overheating. The heat of operation of the TH-5 has no means of escape from the case, and in tropical zones rises to a critical level.

Observations: A perforated case for the TH-5/TG would allow cooling without seriously impairing the dust-proofing of the case.

PART 2: Recommendations

a. Personnel:

R & R Facilities: R & R facilities should be expanded to accommodate at least 50% of the personnel serving in Vietnam in a twelve month period. In addition, R & R centers might be established in other locations.

b. Operations: None

c. Training:

5
SCCVSG-SV-CO

SUBJECT: Operational Report for Quarterly Period Ending 30 April 1967
(RCS CSFOR-65)

Training Materials: Materials such as construction materials and classroom training aids for required training should be included in WABTOC packages for issue to units. A reevaluation of required training subjects should be made with the purpose of reducing the training load for units operating in combat areas. ✓

d. Intelligence: None

e. Logistics:

(1) WABTOC: WABTOC packages should be tailored to suit the individual units needs to conform more closely to actually operating situations. ✓

(2) Spark Plugs: The battalion motor maintainance section should be authorized to stock at least twice the present amount of spark plug, FSN 2910-810-7082, for Generator Set, 10KW, PU-619. ✓

(3) Floating Stock: Base Camp Supply Officers should be authorized to maintain a floating stock of mess hall equipment, and supplies such as canvas cots and tents to be used for temporary loan to sponsors of arriving units. ✓

(4) Terminal, Telegraph TH-5/TG Case: Recommendations for local modification to better ventilate the TH-5/TG Case: Recommendations for local modification to better ventilate the TH-5/TG would reduce outage times caused by overheating. ✓

Walter G. Ellis

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WALTER G. ELLIS

LTC

SigC

Commanding

9
SCCVSG-30 (13 May 1967)

1st Ind

7 JUN 1967

SUBJECT: Operational Report for Quarterly Period Ending 30 April 1967
(RCS CSFOR-65)

HEADQUARTERS, 2D SIGNAL GROUP, APO 96491

THRU: Commanding General, 1st Signal Brigade (USASTATCOM), APO 96307
Commanding General, United States Army Vietnam, APO 96307
Commanding General, United States Army Pacific, APO 96558

TO: Assistant Chief of Staff for Force Development, Department of the
Army (ACSFOR, DA), Washington, D.C. 20310

1. The Operational Report for Quarterly Period Ending 30 April 1967 submitted by the 86th Signal Battalion has been reviewed and found to be adequate, with the following comments noted:

a. Section II, Part 1a: Presently, R&R allocations to the Vung Tau R&R Center are 3 men per day for the 2d Signal Group. Spaces when allotted USAFV-wide by higher headquarters, do not allow for an increase in R&R allocations for 2d Signal Group.

b. Section II, Part 1e: There has been no EIR submitted to modify the TH-5 case.

c. Section II, Part 2e: The unit PLL will automatically adjust itself due to frequency of demand. However, it will take 180 days to adjust PLL authorized quantity.

2. I fully concur with the remaining portions of the Commander's Observations and Recommendations section of the report.

1 Incl
nc

John B. McKinley
JOHN B. MCKINLEY
Colonel, SigC
Commanding

CSWOP (13 May 67)

2d Ind

SUBJECT: Operational Report for the Quarterly Period Ending 30 April 1967
(PCS CSFOR-65)

DA, HQ, 1st Sig Bde (USASTRATCOM), APO SF 96307 13 JUN 1967

TO: \Commanding General, United States Army Vietnam, ATTN: AVHGC-DST,
APO 96307
Commanding General, United States Army Strategic Communications
Command, Fort Huachuca, Arizona 85613

1. IAW AR 1-19, subject report from the 86th Signal Battalion is forwarded.

2. Concur with the Commander's Observations except as noted below and with following comments:

a. Reference Item: In-Country R&R, page 3. The Brigade is authorized eight spaces per month for the In-Country R&R Center at Vung Tau. This R&R Center is designed primarily for enlisted men living under austere and combat conditions; therefore, combat units have priority over service units and the Brigade allocation is small. Quotes received are allocated as follows:

- (1) Headquarters, Headquarters Company/Signal Security Force - 1
- (2) USA Regional Communications Group - 2
- (3) 2d Signal Group - 3
- (4) 21st Signal Group - 2

b. Reference Item: Training Aids, page 3. Film libraries are operated by the 69th Signal Battalion, Camp Gaylor, Tan Son Nhut Air Base, the 586th Signal Company, An Khe, and Company C, 41st Signal Battalion, Cam Ranh Bay. These facilities can provide or procure films and film strips listed in DA Pamphlet 108-1 upon request. Training aids support is provided by the Training Aids Center, Fort Buckner, Okinawa. Requests for training aids must be submitted IAW Appendix VI to USARV Regulation 350-1. The Battalion will be notified of the availability of these facilities. Construction materials for classrooms may be obtained through engineer supply channels. USARV Regulation 405-4, dated 16 December 1966, prescribes the procedures for obtaining this material.

c. Reference Item: Spark Plugs, page 4. PLL stockage quantities are initially computed from Technical Manuals. After a demand history is developed, the stockage quantity should be based on actual quantities which have been used. If current demand data for this unit indicates an increased usage factor of spark plugs then this PLL should be recomputed for

13 JUN 1967

SCCVOP

SUBJECT: Operational Report for the Quarterly Period Ending 30 April 1967
(RCS CSFOR-65)

this item to reflect increased stockage requirements.

d. Reference item: Cases for M-5, page 4. Nonconcur with this item. The observation provides a solution for the heat problems encountered in Vietnam; however, until evidence shows that a perforated case will provide the same degree of protection from dust as does the present case, no modification should be attempted. The Battalion will be requested to submit an Equipment Improvement Recommendation on this item.

3. Concur with the Commander's Recommendations except as noted below and with the following comments:

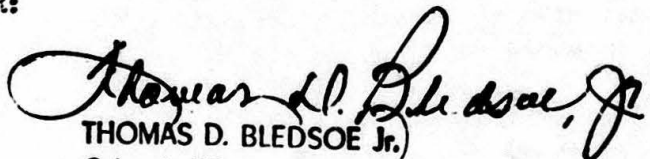
a. Reference Recommendation c, Training Materials, page 5. Do not concur. The issue of construction materials for classrooms in WABTOC Packages are impractical as there is no formula by which classrooms requirements for various units can be determined. A reevaluation of mandatory requirements is programmed prior to 1 August 1967. Brigade Regulation 350-1 will be rewritten and any possible reduction in training will be included in the new regulation.

b. Reference Recommendation e (1) WABTOC, page 5. WABTOC items may be increased by the theater commander based on requirements submitted by the units.

c. Reference Recommendation e (2) Spark Plugs, page 5. See paragraph 2c above.

d. Reference Recommendation e (4) Terminal, Telegraph Th-5/TG Case, page 5. Do not concur. No action should be taken to modify this equipment until an EIR is submitted and the Electronics Command, Fort Monmouth, has conducted a professional evaluation of the recommendation.

FOR THE COMMANDER:



THOMAS D. BLEDSOE Jr.

Colonel, GS
Chief of Staff

10

AVHGC-DST (13 May 67) 3d Ind
SUBJECT: Operational Report-Lessons Learned for the Period Ending
30 April 1967 (RCS CSFOR-65) (U)

HEADQUARTERS, UNITED STATES ARMY VIETNAM, APO San Francisco 96307 4 JUL 1967

TO: Commander in Chief, United States Army, Pacific, ATTN: GPOP-OT,
APO 96558

1. This headquarters has reviewed the Operational Report-Lessons Learned for the period ending 30 April 1967 from Headquarters, 86th Signal Battalion (Support) as indorsed.

2. Pertinent comments follow:

a. Reference item concerning inadequate facilities for in-country M&R program, page 3: In-Country M&R allocations are considered to be inadequate and expansion plans are now under consideration. However, of the present in-country M&R spaces allocated to the 1st Signal Brigade only 66.3% were utilized in the month of May 1967. Low utilization of M&R quotas makes it difficult to justify the expansion of facilities. Further, the out-of-country M&R offers each man an opportunity to participate in the rest and recuperation program. The 1st Signal Brigade used only 72.1% of quotas during the month of May.

b. Reference item concerning WABTOC packages, page 3 and page 5: Nonconcur. DA msg 755880, DTG 181635 Feb 66 authorizes minimum essential housekeeping equipment for normal unit mess operation in the field. Since the operation of three messhalls by one unit is not a normal practice it is not considered feasible to change the WABTOC authorization. The unit should initiate MTOE/MTDA action to obtain equipment in excess of authorization. USAFV msg (U) AVHGC-OT 19073, DTG 251132Z Mar 67, outlines procedures for requesting equipment in excess of authorized allowances.

c. Reference item concerning floating stock, pages 4 and 5: In accordance with AR 711-16, Installation/DSU supply activities are authorized to maintain stockage levels of items of messhall equipment, canvas cots, tentage and related items for which EO's have been established. If Installation/DSU supply activities are not located in the same base camp concerned, these items may be obtained by the sponsor unit from the nearest Direct Support Supply Activity.

AVHGC-DST (13 May 67)

3d Ind

2 JUL 1967

SUBJECT: Operational Report-Lessons Learned for the Period Ending
30 April 1967 (RCS CSFOR-65) (U)

d. Reference item concerning cases for terminal, telephone
TH-5/TG, page 4: Concur with the comments of the 2d Indorsement. The
TH 5 is being replaced by the TH 22 which is a solid state device that
generates negligible heat. As the TH 5's are being turned in through
the "closed-loop" maintenance program they are being modified as TH 22's.

FOR THE COMMANDER:


E. L. KENNEDY
Cpt, AGC
Asst Adjutant General

Says it
True

12
GPOP-DT(13 May 67)

4th Ind

SUBJECT: Operational Report for the Quarterly Period Ending 30 April 1967
from HQ, 86th Sig Bn (Spt) (RCS CSFOR-65)

HQ, US ARMY, PACIFIC, APO San Francisco 96558 13 SEP 1967

TO: Assistant Chief of Staff for Force Development, Department of the
Army, Washington, D. C. 20310

This headquarters has reviewed subject report and concurs in the
report as indorsed.

FOR THE COMMANDER IN CHIEF:



H. BRYDEN
OPT, AGC
Asst AG